

Joint Budget Meeting with Maynard Select Board and Finance Committee

February 12th, 2022

Location: Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89473925552?pwd=Sk9YTUs2eGJwUklsNnpwVWhscTVmQT09>

Finance Committee Members Present:

Alannah Gustavson
Peter Campbell
Ken Estabrook
Katie Moore
Jillian Prendergast
Danielle Ericks
Elliot Bruce

Other Attendees:

School Board members
Various School Committee, Capital Planning Committee, and Town Administrator members
Kate Hogan, Senator Eldridge
Concerned citizens

1. 9:00 – David Gavin called meeting to order
2. Kate Hogan and Senator Eldridge gave their remarks, and discussion followed.
3. Greg Johnson presented the recommended budget: summary of budget sources (real estate and property being biggest) followed with a breakdown of those sources. There was a discussion on the new growth of 300K and how that looked historically. Greg then gave a description of state-aid and MSBA, as well as the cherry sheet. There was a breakdown of local receipts, and questions discussed about revenue in vs. actual cost of each line item. Next discussed was indirect charges, followed by ambulance receipts and the need for a new fire truck. PEG access funds are at a loss. He next discussed amortization of bond revenue, followed with the debt exclusion. We then reviewed a summary of the budget uses by function, education standing out as the highest. Maro raised a question about “pay as you go”, which sparked additional questions.

Greg then moved on to the public safety budge and its 2.18% increase, followed by public works. Mary asked about consulting service costs, which, more may be likely to go to a town engineer. Culture and recreation were discussed, as well as the education budget (joined were Maynard and Assabet). Greg went over employee benefits, which went up significantly. Debt service is dropping, and the state and county assessments cost increased (tied to charter schools).
4. School Board called to order.
5. Overview of Capital Improvement Plan – Capital Planning Committee
6. An analysis of “free cash” was presented – revenues exceed the forecast, meaning we did not spend as much! These are generally one time capital items. We also discussed the tax bill estimates.

***break @ 10:31 – 10:37**

7. Brian Haas Introduced the FY23 proposed budget – for a first, it was connected to the town master plan. Involved in this presentation was:
 - a. Strategic requests to improve MPS
 - b. The staffing needs – Athletic Director, Trainer, ELL Teacher, central office clerical support
 - c. Building level needs at all schools
 - d. Tiger program
 - e. ESSER allocations
 - f. Focus areas looking ahead
8. Discussion and questions surrounding school budget and programs (music and Tiger Trot program). There was a focus in discussion on keeping kids in district.
9. Jon Canchola presented a Capital Planning budget and broke down their work, prioritization process, spending highlights of 6.3M, and a breakdown by department. We looked at the 5 YR capital spending forecast, and the FY22 goals as well as the continued goals into FY23.
10. AT 11:42, Alannah presented the Finance Committee perspectives. We discussed topics including our goals, how we help Maynard and all the good news that has come our way, school funding with a holistic view, options moving forward (more revenue and more targeted money management), as well as FinCom's concerns – school budget % being one of them.
11. 6 minutes were left for a general discussion. There were concerns about an increase of revenue and operational overrides, as well as concerns about ARPA funds going to the DPW.
12. David Gavin motioned to adjourn at noon. For individual committees, Alannah first, Katie seconded. Hillary first, Natasha seconded.